



THE
CONNOISSEUR.

By Mr. T O W N,

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Pallas quas condidit arces

Ipfa colat. — —

VIRG.



THE principal character in *Steel's* comedy of the *Lying Lover* is young *Bookwit*; an Oxonian, who at once throws off the habit and manners of an academic, and assumes the dress, air, and conversation of a man of the town. He is, like other fine Gentlemen, a coxcomb, but a coxcomb of learning and parts. His erudition he renders subservient to his pleasures: his knowledge in Poetry qualifies him for a sonneteer, his Rhetoric to say fine things to the ladies, and his Philosophy to regulate his equipage; for he talks of having *peripatetic* footmen, a *follower of Aristippus* for a *Valet de Chambre*, an *epicurean* cook, with an *hermetical chymist* (who are good only at making fires)

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for a scullion. Thus he is in every particular a fop of letters, a compleat classical beau.

By a review I have lately made of the people in this great metropolis, as CENSOR, I find that the town swarms with *Bookwits*. The play-houses, park, taverns and coffee-houses are thronged with them. Their manner, which has something in it very characteristic, and different from the town-bred coxcombs, discovers them to the slightest observers. It is indeed no easy matter for one whose chief employment is to store his mind with new ideas, to throw that happy vacancy, that total absence of thought and reflection into his countenance, so remarkable in our modern fine gentlemen. The same lounging air too that passes for genteel in an university coffee-house is soon distinguish'd from the genuine careless loll, and easy saunter, and brings us over to the notion of Sir *Willfull* in *The Way of the World*, that a man should be bound 'prentice to a maker of fops, before he ventures to set up for himself.

YET, in spite of all these disadvantages, the love of pleasure and a few supernumerary guineas draws the student from his literary employment, and entices him to this theatre of noise and hurry, this grand mart of pleasure, where, as long as his purse can supply him, he may be as idle as he pleases. I could not help smiling at a dialogue between two of these gentlemen which I overheard a few nights ago at the Bedford coffee-house. "Ha! Jack! (says one accosting the other) is it you? How long have you been in town?"—"Two hours"—"How long do you stay?"—"Ten guineas.—If you'll come to *Venable's* after the play is over, you'll find *Tom Latine*, *Bob Classic* and two or three more who will be very glad to see you. What you're in town upon the sober plan at your father's? But hark ye *Frank*, if you'll call in I'll

" tell

“ tell your friend *Harris* to prepare for you. So your
“ servant; for I’m going to meet the finest girl upon the
“ town in the green boxes.

I LEFT the coffee-house pretty late, and as I came into the piazza the fire in the *Bedford’s Arms* kitchen blazed so cheerfully and invitingly before me, that I was easily persuaded by a friend that was with me, to pass the evening at that house. Our good fortune led us into the next room to this knot of academical rakes. Their merriment being pretty boisterous gave us a good pretext to enquire what company were in the next room. The waiter told us, with a smartness which those fellows frequently contract from attending on beaux and wits, “ Some gentlemen from *Oxford* with some ladies, sir. My master is always very
“ glad to see them, for while they stay in town, they never
“ dine or sup out of his house, and eat and drink, and pay
“ better than any nobleman in town.

As it grew later, they grew louder: ’till at length an unhappy dispute arose between two of the company concerning the present grand contest between the Old and New Interest, which has lately inflamed *Oxfordshire*. This accident might have been attended with ugly consequences: but as the ladies are great enemies to quarrelling, unless themselves are the occasion, a good-natured female of the company interposed, and quelled their animosity. By the mediation of this fair one, the dispute ended very fashionably, in a bet of a dozen of claret to be drank there by the company then present, whenever the wager should be decided. There was something so extraordinary in their whole evening’s conversation, such an odd mixture of the town and university, that I am persuaded, if Sir *Richard* had been witness to it, he could have wrought it into a scene as lively and entertaining as any he has left us.

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THE whole time these lettered beaux remain in *London* is spent in a continual round of diversion. Their sphere indeed is somewhat confined, for they generally eat, drink, and sleep within the precincts of *Covent-Garden*; where after having passed a day or two in the highest scenes of luxury and debauch, they return (as *Bookwit* has it) to small beer and three-half-penny commons.

I SHALL enlarge no further on this subject at present, but conclude these reflexions with an ode which I have received from an unknown correspondent, who tells me it was lately sent to one of these gentlemen, (who had resigned himself wholly to these polite enjoyments, and seemed to have forgot all his connexions with the university) from an academical friend. All who peruse this elegant little piece will, I doubt not, thank me for inserting it, and the learned reader will have the additional pleasure of admiring it as a pleasant and humourous imitation of *Horace*.

An Imitation of HORACE. Book I. Ode xxix.

*Icci, beatis nunc Arabum invides
Gazis, &c.*

I.

SO you, my friend, at last are caught,
Where could you get so strange a thought,
In mind and body sound?
All meaner studies you resign,
Your whole ambition now to shine
The Beau of the Beau-Monde.

II.

Say, gallant youth, what well-known name
Shall spread the triumphs of thy fame
Through all the realms of *Drury*?
How will you strike the gaping cit?
What tavern will record thy wit?
What watchmen mourn thy fury? What

III.

What sprightly imp of *Gallic* breed

Shall have the culture of thy head,

(I mean the outward part)

Formed by his parent's early care

To range in nicest curls the hair,

And wield the puff with art?

IV.

No more let mortals toil in vain

By wise conjecture to explain

What rolling time will bring:

Thames to his source may upwards flow,

Or *Garrick* six foot high may grow,

Or witches thrive at *Tring*.

V.

Since you each better promise break,

Once fam'd for slovenliness and *Greek*,

Now turn'd a very *Paris*,

For lace and velvet quit your gown,

The STAGYRITE for Mr. TOWN,

For *Drury-Lane* St. MARY's.

I SHALL here subjoin a letter which I have received from the country.

To Mr. TOWN.

S I R,

BESIDES the common objections made to the late Marriage-Bill, my own family furnishes me with a peculiar instance of the inconveniences arising from it, which (though I dare say many others have experienc'd) has not yet been taken notice of. You must know, Sir, that I have two daughters, and it has ever been my greatest con-

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cern to see them well settled. They have had several very advantageous offers, which I should have been very well pleased with, and would have come down very handsomely; but they always put me off with saying, that indeed they could not think of leaving their dear papa, that they should never be so happy with husbands, as with each other, — and twenty excuses of the like nature. But the case is now quite altered: and since the clamour about the above-mentioned Act they are frightened out of their wits, lest they should get no husbands at all. My eldest girl has just taken it into her head to be in love; and she is very uneasy that I am against her having an idle young fellow, who is not worth a penny, and whom till lately she used to look upon with contempt. As to poor *Betsy*, my youngest girl, she has taken to the trick of eating chalk, oatmeal, and the like kind of trash, which young girls are apt to grow fond of, when their thoughts are turned upon an husband. I don't chuse to speak to them myself on this head; but as the girls read your paper, I take this method of informing them that the Marriage-Bill does not at all affect them, as they may depend on my not making an ill use of my authority.

I am, sir, Yours, &c.

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TO MR. T. W. M.

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BESIDES the common objections made to the late Marriage-Bill, my own family furnished me with a peculiar instance of the inconvenience arising from it, which (though I dare say many others have experienced) has not yet been taken notice of. You must know, sir, that I have two daughters, and it has ever been my greatest care